

R O S A
D E
MONTMORIEN.

VOL. II.

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R O S A
D E
M O N T M O R I E N .

A N O V E L .

By Miss ANN HILDITCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

Printed for WILLIAM LANE, Leadenhall-Street.

M.DCC.LXXXVII.



R O S A
D E
M O N T M O R I E N.

C H A P T E R X I I .

THE HISTORY OF
ROSA DE MONTMORIEN.

ROSA DE MONTMORIEN was daughter to the Marquis de Chatignac, one of the most illustrious warriors the annals of France can produce. At the close of a campaign, in which he had signalized
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himself by a complete victory over the troops of the imperial enemy, he retired from court on some slight disgust conceived at the preference shown by the King to the young Duke de Louvais (who had served under the Marquis as a volunteer).

The Marchioness, an amiable and beautiful woman, (and cousin to Lord Seymour) highly approved this retirement, as it favoured her intention of superintending the education of her infant daughter; that of her son was entrusted to the Abbe des Chastelle, agreeable to a stipulation in their

their marriage contract, by which it was ordained that the daughters should be brought up in the Protestant Faith, and the sons in that of the Church of Rome. The Marchioness, who for so laudable a purpose relinquished the splendid circle of a court, did not, however, live to see her views accomplished; and Rosa was confided to the care of Mademoiselle la Bertrande, a lady of family in Languedoc, and distantly allied to the Marquis.

Rosa possessed an acute penetration and a susceptible heart. Her seclusion from the world had not damp-

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ed the vivacity of her disposition, though the contracted sphere she yet moved in had restricted her amusements, which were chiefly confined to music and reading, which latter recreation, consisting mostly of romances, had given an eccentric turn to her naturally vivific imagination.

Scarce had yet she attained her sixteenth year, when the Marquis, at the solicitation of the Count de Montmorien (who declared himself a candidate for the heart of his daughter) returned to Paris, careffed at court, immersed in the gay follies of fashionable

53 58 able

able life. Rosa, young, beautiful and inexperienced, heard, unconcerned, her father's design of bestowing her on the Count. Universally regarded with admiration, she sought not to acquire the esteem of any one in particular, and therefore treated the Count with complacency, and apparently acquiesced with the sentiments of the Marquis: but not always are the volatile and versatile inclinations of youth to be esteemed a security by the *cautious* lover; Rosa, while thoughtless in her pursuits, and puerile in her actions, found the empoisoned shafts of love irresistible.

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The Duke de Louvais, at this period, returned from Italy, and presented to her an object glowing with sensibility, and adorned with every exterior charm which fascinates the eye or captivates the heart. In Rosa he beheld every native beauty, combined with wit, spirit, and elegance. Her mind, yet uncorrupted by art, or disturbed by that courtly attendant *envy* (however uncultivated) promised to be the future abode of every genial virtue—and unconscious of the resentment of the Marquis, he gave way, without reserve, to the tenderness she inspired.—At
balls,

balls, he danced with her, and escorted her to every public place; and Rosa had entangled her affections ere she suspected them in danger. Her engagements with Montmorien were forgotten; and not till informed by her father that the ensuing week was fixed on for their nuptials, had she regarded him as her destined lord.

The haughty Chatignac had seen, with pleasure, the affection of Louvais for his daughter, and anticipated, in the triumph of Montmorien, the secret revenge he meditated against the Duke. "It is now," said he

to Rosa, " you will avenge, by be-
 " coming the wife of Montmorien,
 " in some measure the injuries we
 " have sustained from the family of
 " the Duke."—" The wife of Mont-
 " morien!" exclaimed the artless
 Rosa; " Ah, Louvais!"—" Is it pos-
 " sible," cried the enraged Marquis,
 " you can think with fondness on the
 " enemy of your father?"—" Oh,
 " my Lord! Louvais is your friend;
 " he reveres your valour, and esteems
 " your person."—" Weak girl, what
 " have you done? Have you forgot
 " you are contracted to Montmo-
 " rien?"—" Ah no! but my heart is
 " already

" already disposed of to another."—
 " I see, Rosa, my folly in supposing
 " my resentments would steel the bo-
 " som of my child ; but 'tis now too
 " late to recant, and the Countess
 " de Montmorien must vanquish the
 " idle prepossessions of Rosa de Cha-
 " tignac."

This interview tended only to ac-
 celerate the marriage, and immedi-
 ately the Count departed with her
 for his estate on the frontiers of
 Normandy. To the gloomy man-
 sion of his ancestors the dejected
 Rosa was conveyed. She shuddered

as

as she entered the dreary avenue which led to it, and seemed to feel a preffentiment of the miseries which she was there to experience.—The ponderous gates were thrown open for them, and closed on their entrance.—The humid walls of the cloisters, through which they passed to their apartments, were decked with mouldering trophies and ruinous sculptures (the monuments of his ancestors, whose remains, with tenacious pomp, were deposited in this castle) chilled every feeling of the unfortunate Countess. Doomed to suffer in silence, she pined o'er the beloved

beloved recollection of Louvais, and resigned herself wholly to the fatal affection which preyed on her peace.

Conscious of his own indefert, and too sensible of her predilection for the Duke, the Count embittered every anguish by jealousy, and, by tortured constructions in the minutest actions, confirmed to himself his ungenerous suspicions. If a momentary gleam of chearfulness broke through the melancholy which absorbed the Countess, he concluded she had either seen or heard from her lover: If a prey to silent sorrow, she lamented her fate in secret,

secret, he imagined her devising some plot against him. At length, wearied with his own suspicions, and piqued at her indifference, he resolved to return to Paris.

Immured within this solitary place, with no other companions than the young Clara and La Bertrande (whom the Count retained as governess to his sister) she passed a tedious twelve-month; during which period nothing worth reciting occurred, save the death of the Marquis. Rosa now reflected that she had no friend but her unkind husband—the difference

ference of faith having totally estranged her from her brother.—She therefore determined to struggle with her fondness for Louvais; and in this resolution wrote to the Count, conjuring him, in the tenderest terms, to return. No answer, however, was vouchsafed her: his prejudices were not to be vanquished by tenderness, or combated with reason.—The life of the Duke could only expiate the suppositious injury; and he impatiently sought an occasion of wreaking the vengeance he meditated on that unfortunate nobleman.

An

An accident soon favoured these wishes, by giving him a shadow of reason for revenge.—One evening the pensive Countess, accompanied by her sister and La Bertrande, had strolled towards the gates of the avenue, and, charmed by the serenely beautiful scene which presented itself to their view, sat down beneath the pines—more calmly to enjoy the delightfully contemplative prospect.—The moon, with mildest lustre, glided o'er the vivid tinged horizon, dispersing her pellucid beams, which wantonly sported with the waving boughs o'er their heads, and illuming the interesting

groupe

groupe which approached them. Slowly ascending the winding road on the side of the hill, was a party of gentlemen, who had been hunting in the forest of ———, but, the chace being diverted by the increasing gloom of night, were now retiring to the neighbouring village.

Amongst them was a young Cavalier, whose superior port bespoke his rank, leading a beautiful courser up the steep before the rest of the gentlemen, who with less consideration were riding their tired horses in spite of the craggy ascent. So lovely a
vista

vista as our fair triumvirate, could not fail to attract the notice of the gallant sportsman, who, drawing near to them, exclaimed, "the Countess de Montmorien!"—"Louvais!" cried Rosa, eagerly rising and springing towards him, yet arrested in her motion by his sudden prostration at her feet, "is it you?"—"The same, my Lady," replied the Duke, recollecting she was now the wife of another, "the same Louvais who adored, who respects, who esteems you."—"Ah, my Lord!" returned the Countess, sensible of her error, "I fear that respect I have forfeited, by

“ by my involuntary lapse from the
 “ duty I *owe* the Count—but sur-
 “ prise had overwhelmed my reason,
 “ and the joy of beholding you again
 “ gave birth to an emotion my na-
 “ tural sincerity knew ill how to
 “ disguise.”—Without waiting a re-
 ply, she presented him to the ladies,
 to whose astonishment and curiosity
 this introduction was a seasonable
 relief. The rest of the party came
 up, to whom Louvais made a concise
 apology, and assured them he would
 speedily follow to the village.

The ladies again seated themselves

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on

on the grass, and the Duke was conversing with Rosa in the endearing language of love, (by an unlooked for—a sad event, untimely mellowed into friendship) when they were interrupted by a rustling amid the leaves, and ere the Countess could turn round to see from whence the noise proceeded, the report of a pistol struck her ear, and she beheld the Duke fall bleeding at her feet.—Pale and aghast, the assassin let fall the dreadful implement from his trembling hand. Rosa wildly fixed her eyes on him, and sunk senseless in the arms of La Bertrande, who scarcely was able to support

support her. The Count, whose jealousy was alarmed at the near approximation of the castle to the forest destined for the chace, had loitered the whole day in disguise in the environs ; and meeting the remainder of the sportsmen, enquired for the Duke, who, they informed him, they had left at the chateau. This was sufficient to rouse his resentment, and hastily charging his pistols, he had stole behind, and listened to a conversation, which, while perfectly innocent, and participated by his sister and her governess, had irritated his

vengeance, and wrought so dreadful a catastrophe.

The timid Clara, on seeing the Duke fall, had flown to the house and alarmed the servants. On their approach, recovering from the silent stupor in which he had stood dejectedly viewing the murdered Louvais, he commanded them to take up the corpse and bury it in the cloister, adding, that he was a robber who had attacked the ladies, and would have stripped them of their jewels, but for his *fortunate* arrival. They did not indeed believe this feint, but they
knew

knew too well the ferocity of his nature to express their doubts of the truth of his assertion, and therefore interred the scarce-cold body with the ancestors of Montmorien.

The moment which deprived Louvais of life, in bereaving Rosa of her senses, shielded her from sorrows her tender frame was not formed to endure. She was conveyed to the castle, and put to bed in a burning fever. The Count, alone in his library, passed the night in reflecting on her sufferings and his own guilt. Unable to bear her sight, he shrunk from the

afflicted Clara, whom he considered as dishonoured by the crime of her brother; and, a prey to the keenest remorse, wore away the *tedious hours*.

In the morning, the Chevalier de Terrefat came in search of the Duke, whom the domestics were ordered to say left the castle the preceding evening. Not satisfied with this answer, the Chavalier went over every apartment, but found no traces of him, and, disappointed and apprehensive, he returned to Paris with the intelligence of this strange event.

Mean-

Meanwhile the Count determined to embark for Malta, convinced France could not long be a safe residence for him; yet to leave the Countess in her present state was impossible.—With the object of his jealousy his unkindness died, and the affection so long suppressed by groundless suspicions and unfavourable surmises, now blazed forth in all its genuine ardour.—He beheld her reduced to the brink of the grave. Her youth blighted by his cruelty, her senses lost and annihilated through his means—and incapable of receiving the reparation he anxiously sought

to make, he watched by her bed-side whole days, while, insensible to all around, she hardly seemed to breathe.

On the seventh day (subsequent to the dire transaction) her disorder took a new turn.—Wildly she called on Louvais, and implored heaven to avenge his murder.—Then again pleaded for him to her husband, and conjured him to spare a life so dear to her.

Distracted by her ravings, Montmorien fixed on the following evening for his departure, having previously

viously arranged his affairs, and settled his fortune and estate on the infensate Countess.—Egbert (a faithful domestic before mentioned) alone was permitted to accompany him in this sad expedition.

At the close of the day, the Countess insisted on being acquainted with the burial place of her lover, and escaping from her attendants, impatiently sought the cloister, unseen by any but the Count, who followed her at a distance.—Frantic she knelt to the tomb of his forefathers, and bedewed it with her tears.—Reclin'd on the
cold

cold marble, he saw the head, whose once clear perceptions, whose charming sensibilities, all blended with insane chimerical notions, stupidly rested on the grave of her lover, and invoked the minister of peace once more to bless her pillow.

No longer able to restrain his grief, he would have retired—but awakened by the sudden rising of the Countess, he stood still, waiting tremblingly to see what new extravagance would ensue.—With hasty steps she came up to him, and throwing herself at his feet, addressed him in the following

ing suppliant strain:—"Thou herald
" of death, whose hand hath so rudely
" severed me from myself—speak,
" and command yon relentless tomb
" to open its ponderous jaws, and
" suffer me to enter and embalm
" with my tears the cold corpse of
" my *love*.—He is dead; nor shall
" vengeance be kindled in the grave.
" Quickly! quickly!" continued she,
" inter me with him, or the Count
" will be here.—Hush! he must not
" know I seek Louvais through the
" chill regions of death.—Hark! do
" you not hear him come? But
" Louvais

“ Louvais is safe : He is entombed,
 “ and hid from me and from him.”

“ Oh Rosa ! injured Rosa !” cried
 the Count, in an agony, “ do you not
 “ know me ? Will you not pity
 “ your wretched husband ?”—“ Hus-
 “ band !” repeated the Countess ;
 “ Louvais was the husband of my
 “ heart ; but he is murdered, you
 “ know—See how his pale form
 “ gleams round me—See, all clotted
 “ with gore, hyacinthine curls—but
 “ you shall not follow—No, Mont-
 “ morien, the mansion of the blessed
 “ is his.—Behold” (looking upwards

as

as if she still saw him) "how the pur-
"pled pinioned angels bear him
"away through the blue etherial
"vaults of heaven; and shall I stay?
"Oh, yes, the Count restrains
"my flight."—Breaking from her,
Montmorien would have left her,
but clasping him as she arose, she
cried, in accents of horror, "Stay,
"Montmorien! leave me not! Tell
"me, my Lord, where am I!"—
"By the grave of Louvais," he
would have said, but utterance was
denied him.—"I have injured you,"
said the Countess, who interpreted
his silence as proceeding from anger;

"I

"I have never, never wronged you."

—"No, my beloved Rosa, 'tis I am

"the aggressor—you are innocent—

"I only must sue for pardon."—

"Gracious God," cried she, "then

"you must allow me guiltless, and

"may heaven forgive your crime.

"Yes, murdered Louvais, thou shalt

"plead for my Lord."

Tears prevented her articulating distinctly the ejaculation she breathed; and, composed and rational, she returned with the Count to the saloon, where he informed her of his intended departure.—She heard with complacency

placency his professions of repentance; she assured him of her forgiveness; "but why, my Lord," added she, "would you distrust me, when I "had taught my heart to esteem "you? when, all its wanderings "corrected, it would have returned "to you, its home?" But to be brief, the Count departed, and the Countess daily recovered.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

THE NARRATIVE CONCLUDED.

SOME months past ere they heard any intelligence of him—when Egbert was announced to the Countess as requesting an audience.—“I come, my Lady,” said he as he entered, “to bring my last wishes of my Lord, to forestall the shock his approach will give you.”—“How,” cried

cried the Countess, "is he not well,
"and in safety?" A deep sigh was
the only answer Egbert could re-
turn.

Rosa, who had survived a stroke so
cruel as the death of Louvais, was
equal to every other catastrophe a
rigid destiny could inflict. His
silence confirmed her rising appre-
hensions, and she spared him the
painful recital by exclaiming, "Ah,
"Egbert, he is no more!"—"No,
"Madam," cried he, "the Count
"has resigned a being made wretched
"by his crimes—but ask me not

" how—be satisfied by still having in
 " your power to pay the last melan-
 " choly rites, and deposit his remains
 " with the ashes of his ancestors."—
 " Tell me only," said the Countess,
 " that he died not by his own hand ;
 " I will search no further into this
 " dreadful event."—" The ven-
 " geance of heaven, Madam," re-
 turned Egbert, " pursued him, and
 " signalized in his end the certainty
 " of retribution."—" Ah !" cried
 Rosa, " am I not yet prepared to
 " meet your intelligence ! Has not
 " the blood of Louvais effaced every
 " trace of womanish fear from my
 " soul !

“ soul! Speak freely then, faithful
 “ Egbert, nor think me unequal to
 “ sustaining the evils fate dooms me
 “ to bear.”

Encouraged by the firmness of her
 manner, and sad severity of her coun-
 tenance—the good domestic proceed-
 ed as follows:

“ We arrived, my Lady, safe at
 “ Malta, where we spent some days,
 “ and again embarked for Palestine,
 “ whither my Lord had a romantic
 “ desire to go. His country was
 “ forgot; his affections alienated from

“ those whom his jealousy has made
“ miserable and dishonoured ; and
“ his heart speedily became as sus-
“ ceptible of new impressions, as for-
“ getful of its former ones. Your
“ name, Madam, was prohibited
“ being mentioned, and his own
“ discarded ; and that of La Berli
“ assumed. During our residence in
“ the Holy Land, my Lord had
“ commenced an intrigue with a
“ beautiful young Greek, whose hus-
“ band was absent on a journey to
“ Constantinople ; and with this
“ young lady he passed much of his
“ time, till the return of Signior
“ Elberti

" Elberti precluded his visiting her
 " so often.—The Count's intimacy
 " with Saroula had not escaped the
 " notice of some persons, who in-
 " stantly (on his return) informed
 " Signior Elberti of it.—The Italian,
 " prone to suspicion, needed not a
 " confirmation of her infidelity to
 " stimulate his vengeance—and one
 " evening, retiring from a ball, he
 " was assassinated by a ruffian evi-
 " dently hired for that purpose.
 " Thus, my Lady, did he fall a sa-
 " crifice to the same passion which
 " had made himself a murderer, and
 " without even leisure to repent his

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“ accumulated guilt. With some
“ difficulty I obtained permission to
“ remove his mangled corpse, which
“ is now on the road, attended by a
“ Greek servant, whom my Lord
“ took into his service during our
“ stay in Palestine. This, my Lady,
“ is the painful *truth*, which my fears
“ for your already so cruelly wound-
“ ed, so wantonly assailed peace,
“ tempted me to conceal: but
“ heaven, who doubtless inspires our
“ actions, will, I hope, enable you to
“ support, with fortitude, this un-
“ expected calamity.”

This

This short narrative was succeeded by reflections on the part of the Countess, which, while natural to one in her situation, would not amuse the reader. She found herself mistress of a large fortune, and totally divested of all authority from any relation that might influence her conduct. Her heart, torn by the remembrance of Louvais, she became listless and uneasy; and her romantic project of visiting England in disguise, seemed formed to dispel her present anxiety. The tender Clara, who thought she owed implicit obedience to the wishes of her unhappy sister, readily entered

into her wild schemes ; and La Bertrande passively followed her beloved pupils.—Her assumed habit screened the Countess from the knowledge of Lord Seymour ; and Clara's concealment was only necessary to be attended to, as they were both acquainted with him at Paris.

The first interview of Rosa with Strickland, relumed the embers of passion in her bosom ; and Louvais, whom he strongly resembled, seemed again to live in him. Fearful of a rival in the superior charms of Clara, Rosa concealed her less through prudential

dential considerations than jealousy from the Seymour family. She effectually preserved the secret of her disguise, till, alarmed by the apparent danger of Strickland, the Countess discovered herself to Lionel, urged her claim as his relation to his favour, and solicited the instant discharge of the prisoner.

Her person, however attractive, was but a secondary object with Mr. Seymour, whose interest was ever present, and whose ready brain instantaneously suggested the acquisition of the Countess's fortune.—He therefore

fore stipulated that she should enter into an agreement to marry him, should he survive, at the expiration of a twelvemonth; and by enlarging on the rigour of the law, and his power over Strickland, so intimidated Rosa, that she reluctantly signed the fatal contract.—She had, indeed, liberated her lover, but enslaved herself; and the only alleviation she derived, was from the promise of Lionel to conceal her story, and suffer her to pass the intermediate space as she herself approved.

Her nice apprehensions, alarmed
by

by the vicinity of Clara's residence to the road Strickland travelled, had caused her precipitate flight from London, and she arrived at — only to find her fears realized. Distracted by her own situation with Mr. Seymour, and Strickland's unequivocal affection for her sister, she was dubious how to act; while the gentle Clara, terrified by her appearance, and subdued by her own sorrows to appease the keen despair of the Countess, solemnly vowed never to give her hand to the object of her affections, or seek to inform him of her circumstances,

cumstances, or the conduct of her sister.

Satisfied by this asseveration, Rosa turned her thoughts solely to avoiding an alliance with Seymour, and with all possible celebrity resolved to return to France. She therefore wrote Lionel a fictitious account of the indisposition of her sister, and while he waited patiently and unsuspectingly her return, she embarked on board a small vessel for Dieppe, and arrived safely at the chateau de G——, in ten days after her departure from London.

Pensive

Pensive and dejected, she now retired from the world, and shrunk with horror from the retrospection of her late conduct. Duplicity had blotted the unfullied purity of her soul. She had destroyed the peace of the innocent Clara, and perhaps deeply wounded the heart of Strickland. The idea was insupportable : she had violated the laws of society, and though not those of *strict* and *impartial* justice, she had by so doing exposed her character to the merciless representation of disappointed avarice and irritated pride, by her flight from Mr. Seymour. Oftimes was she prompted

ed to return to England, and perform her agreement with him; to restore to Strickland the amiable object her jealousy had robbed him of;—but shame, and perhaps an emotion more tender, prevented her from putting this design in execution.

While struggling with a conflict so painful, she was compelled to assume an air of chearfulness, lest she should betray to her sister her indiscreet promise to Mr. Seymour, or her more flagrant breach of fidelity with regard to Strickland. But fruitless was the attempt to sooth the sorrows of that
lovely

lovely sufferer : her delicate sensibility forbore any reference to the past. She affected an air of gaiety before the Countess, but her health and spirits gradually decayed, and of the sprightly Clara, remained only a fragil form, and a heart penetrated with grief, and sinking beneath its disappointments. Resolved to endure with fortitude the frowns of fortune, she readily entered into the pursuits of Rosa, who, restless at home, sought adventures abroad. " The wide field of uncorrupted nature is before us, my sister," (would she say) " let us explore its path, and philosophically
" smile

" smile at the untoward incidents of
 " life."

One fine morning, in the beginning of summer, our beauteous sisters strolled towards a little copse, where they were informed an old man resided, with all the self-denial and austerity of an anchorite. " Who knows," cried Rosa (as they walked) " but this
 " moralist may teach us to bear with
 " composure our mutual sorrow."
 The hopeless Clara sighed, and they continued their way. They had scarce advanced twenty paces in the wood, ere they heard the voice of
 the

the hermit and another gentleman. Through the branches of the trees they had a faint glimpse of them; and, actuated by that *feminine* passion curiosity, seated themselves on a bank, and attentively listened to the conversation.

“ You are discomfited, young
 “ man,” (said the venerable preceptor) “ because your life has been
 “ chequered with evil, and embitter-
 “ ed by disappointment: Subdued
 “ by sorrows, you sit down despon-
 “ dent, and condemn consolation for
 “ want of resolution to seek it.”

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"Alas!" replied the other, "my
 "hopes are annihilated, and my pur-
 "suits deranged; my happiness for-
 "feited, and the chain of sympathy,
 "which linked me to society, broken.
 "My enfeebled faculties no medi-
 "cine can restore; no comfort lull
 "the clamours of my miseries to
 "rest."

"Cease, son," returned the her-
 mit, "to arraign the wisdom of
 "omniscience; cease to sin against
 "the goodness of Providence: Look
 "on the scenes around you, and be
 "convinced how fallacious are your
 "argu-

" arguments, how idle your despair.
 " Behold the embryo blossoms burst-
 " ing into day : See every herb, in-
 " vigorated by the friendly dew-drops
 " of evening, glisten in the rays of
 " yon luminous orb, and with renew-
 " ed verdure spring o'er the ena-
 " melled mead. Listen to the wing-
 " ed choir, who swell the pæans of
 " the Being that calls forth their pow-
 " ers, and tell me, if he who bids the
 " face of creation wear this chearful
 " aspect, cannot restore content to
 " your bosom?"

The stranger hid his face in his

handkerchief, and the anchoret proceeded:

“ Life, like the shining drops
“ which form the iris bow, is beheld
“ glowing in vivid charms, or formed
“ bred by gloom, as regarded thro’
“ the medium of candid impartiality,
“ or obliquely shaded by prejudice.
“ Its wants are intrinsically few, its
“ evils remote, and generally incurred
“ by our own vanities and impetu-
“ osity. I have ranged through its
“ brightest scenes—I have exulted in
“ the smiles of a monarch, and toiled
“ with the abject peasants—I have
“ pursued

“ pursued coy science through the
 “ deviating paths of scholastic sys-
 “ tems—I have followed her by the
 “ theory of sophists, and found her in
 “ the tracts of nature—I have tasted
 “ affluence, and subsisted on alms—I
 “ have been pampered with luxuries,
 “ and fed on the roots of the earth.
 “ Happiness, my son, is a vain search;
 “ ’tis not to be found, but imagina-
 “ tion supplies it.—To bear, without
 “ repining, the ills of life, is literally
 “ to be happy.”

The stranger was silent ; an eglan-
tine had extended its luxuriant bran-

ches, and he plucked the blossoms, and thoughtlessly cropt its leaves. As they fell to the ground, he sighed.—

“ Mark,” said the hermit, “ the conviction which abounds in the most trivial objects : yon flower attracted your hand, and you easily attained it—yet scarce had your eyes dwelt on its beauties, ere you wantonly destroyed the charms which you admired.—Thus ardent in some equally puerile pursuits, your carelessness has forfeited in your folly the end of your search.—Learn, youth, to correct and subdue thy passions. To cool deliberate reason
“ son

“son, every thing is attainable : She
 “will teach thee to value life justly,
 “and despise its vanities.”

The stranger raised his voice ; “My
 “father !” said he, “experience has
 “made thee wise, and affliction
 “taught thee fortitude. Age, with
 “torpid hand, has blunted thy sen-
 “sibility, and cold stoicism breathes
 “in thy didacted opinions : but
 “could you, in the animated season
 “of youth, when benevolence and
 “friendship dilate the heart, and soft
 “affection harmonizes our jarring
 “natures, could’st thou then sternly

"repel the rising emotions of anguish,
 "or forbid the hoarse accent of care
 "to intrude on thy repose? Could'st
 "thou check the fancy's towering
 "flight, or restrain the passions in
 "their full force? Could'st thou defy
 "the malevolence of fortune, or say
 "to thine assaulter, I am not vulne-
 "rable?"

The anchoret wept. "Early,
 "child of sorrow," said he, "I was
 "taught the lesson of rigid destiny;
 "yet time hath not yet feared its
 "wounds, nor age obliterated its
 poignancy.

“ poignancy. Hear then my words
“ with attention, and profit by the
“ vicissitudes I have known.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

A N E P I S O D E.

“ **F**ROM a crowned head my
“ family derived their splen-
“ dor; and from the ancient barons
“ of Montfort, their riches: From
“ generals who depopulated provin-
“ ces, I inherit my courage; and
“ from statesmen who controuled
“ kings, my ambition: From mitred
“ prelates

“ prelates who wielded arms, my
“ pride ; and from ladies who
“ captivated princes, and enslaved
“ knights, my vanity and my caprice.
“ An assemblage of grandeur, power,
“ birth, beauty, and riches, illustrated
“ my ancestry ; and through devious
“ posterities transmitted me the
“ Earldom of Carlemant and the
“ Principality of ———. If expe-
“ rience could have warned, or coun-
“ sel retarded my views of aggran-
“ dizing my family, I had now been
“ blest as the father of my people,
“ not reviled as a despot. In the
“ wars of Edward the third, the
“ premature

“ premature end of my great grand-
“ fire might have taught me the
“ inutility of *arrogating* a title by
“ which law was disregarded and
“ the line of succession annulled. If
“ the untimely decease of my uncle,
“ who was instrumental to the mar-
“ tyrdom of Charles, could have re-
“ strained me from meddling with
“ party disputes, I had escaped a
“ year’s confinement in the Bastile :
“ but neither retrospection or cau-
“ tion I heeded—and I fell a victim
“ to ungoverned avarice, and an un-
“ satiable love of power.

“ As

“ As soon as I was capable of
“ assuming the reins of government,
“ I repaired to the court of ———,
“ whither, as a tributary of the em-
“ pire, it was necessary I should go.—
“ Carested by the sovereign, and
“ flattered by his nobles, I fancied
“ the highest dignities within my
“ grasp ; and dazzled by the blaze of
“ Majesty, I aspired to the grand
“ dutchy of ———, to which end I
“ asserted a claim in right of my
“ mother, who was lineally descended
“ from the founder of that family.

“ In vain did Gonzales (a faithful
“ minister

“ minister of my father’s) represent
 “ to me the folly of urging a plea, not
 “ only absolute, but unjust; in vain
 “ point out the devastation which
 “ menaced my dominions from the
 “ potent resentment of the reigning
 “ Duke. I obstinately persisted in
 “ petitioning the King to assist me
 “ in my enterprize, and levied in my
 “ principality a numerous army, and
 “ made every preparation for war.
 “ Inured to a habit of luxury, I had
 “ neglected every useful study, and
 “ spent my time in the company of
 “ the ladies and the nobility of my
 “ dissolute court. To military dis-
 “ cipline

" cipline I was an utter stranger
 " myself—I therefore committed the
 " command of my troops to a young
 " man, whose martial air and in-
 " sinuating manners had gained some
 " small portion of esteem with the
 " populace.

" In every superfluous appendage
 " of royalty I delighted. I lavished
 " millions on my parasites and fa-
 " vourites, and by living in more
 " than *modern Asiatic splendor*, at the
 " court of the King of —, I had
 " nearly exhausted my treasure. That
 " great monarch, who clearly saw the
 " ridi-

“ ridiculous tendency of my views,
 “ in friendly terms exhorted me to
 “ abandon so dangerous a scheme,
 “ and positively refused to aid the
 “ attempt.

“ Resolved to pursue my wishes,
 “ and furious from the resistance it
 “ met with, I gave orders to my
 “ officers to assess a third part of the
 “ property of my subjects—in conse-
 “ quence of which extortion, they
 “ rebelled; and while my troops were
 “ employed in quelling the insur-
 “ gents, the grand Duke marched at
 “ the head of a gallant soldiery (less
 “ formi-

“ formidable from their numbers
 “ than their discipline) into my do-
 “ minions, and without opposition
 “ reached my capital.—The people
 “ flocked to his standard, and my
 “ troops, undisciplined and ill paid,
 “ deserted their colours, and, without
 “ a single blow, submitted to the
 “ victor.—Myself was taken prisoner,
 “ with my wife and two children,
 “ and carried into ———, where we
 “ were however treated with respect.
 “ A stipulated sum was allotted me
 “ for my subsistence, and being com-
 “ pelled to ratify the surrender of my
 “ territories, by signing a definitive
 Vol. II. F “ treaty,

“ treaty, I was permitted to leave

“ ———.

“ With more than a competence, I
 “ set out with my family for Paris,
 “ where I plunged into every scene
 “ of dissipation that city afforded.
 “ In all cabals I was the head; and in
 “ the late memorable transaction of
 “ the Court and Cardinal, took so ac-
 “ tive a part, as to be necessitated to
 “ leave the kingdom.—But justice,
 “ which is sometimes, however sel-
 “ dom, administered by kings, pre-
 “ vailed; and the man whose chief
 “ *crime was the practice of philanthropy*

“ and *beneficence*, received his liberty,
 “ and the applause his conduct had
 “ ever so richly merited.—Punish-
 “ ment was inflicted on the guilty
 “ only, and I returned to Paris, after
 “ having in Lombardy toiled in the
 “ fields disguised as a day-labourer,
 “ and in a remote part of Bulgaria
 “ subsisted on the charity of its in-
 “ habitants and the produce of the
 “ earth.

“ Misfortune had humbled my
 “ pride, and reflection taught me
 “ wisdom—and after two years ab-
 “ sence from that city, I returned,

“ resolved to devote the remainder
 “ of my life to scientific pursuits;—
 “ but, wearied with the pedantic dis-
 “ putes of the learned, and wanting
 “ interest to introduce myself to the
 “ notice of l’Academie Royale; I
 “ renounced my design of giving my
 “ works to the world. When I was
 “ presented by the Comte de R——
 “ to his illustrious patron the Duke
 “ de R——, with him I found some
 “ favour; for, with a goodness un-
 “ paralleled, he suffered me to pane-
 “ gyricize him in a dedication of a
 “ piece he did not even know the
 “ tenor of:—nay, the discoveries it
 “ exem-

“ exemplified in the system of attrac-
 “ tion, he could never be made
 “ to comprehend. The Duke was a
 “ man of pleasure, and had my writ-
 “ ings consisted of romances and
 “ lampoons, he would doubtless have
 “ befriended me; but had I found
 “ out the longitude, he would have
 “ disregarded it as a trifle beneath his
 “ notice.—Here, however, I had the
 “ advantage of an excellent library,
 “ where the choicest authors stood
 “ unmolested on their shelves, and
 “ were only admired for the beauty
 “ of their binding, the most material

“ point in the study of a fine gen-
“ tleman.

“ In this way I passed some years,
“ till, one night, returning to my
“ house, I perceived two gentlemen
“ warmly disputing at the corner of
“ la Rue St. Honore, and who drew
“ on each other. I attempted to pre-
“ vent mischief, but in the scuffle
“ was wounded. The one was left
“ dead on the spot, while I, faint from
“ loss of blood, remaining near the
“ body, was secured by the officers of
“ the Police, and committed to the
“ Bastile, where, being recognized as
“ the

" the author of some smart *epigrams*,
 " I was, by order of the minister,
 " retained as a *state* prisoner: but
 " heaven, whose peculiar care is in-
 " nocence, distressed by a singular
 " exertion of humanity, acquitted me
 " of the murder.

" A young surgeon, who had been
 " sent by the real assassin to the as-
 " sistance of his unfortunate anta-
 " gonist, was present at my departure
 " for the Bastile, and kindly solicited
 " permission to attend me in prison,
 " and dress the wound I had received
 " from the combatants. To him I

F 4 " related

“ related my adventures; and with
“ unremitting zeal he attended the
“ ministers, till, wearied by his per-
“ severance, the porter admitted him
“ to the secretary, the secretary to
“ his lordship, to whom he explained
“ my case, and pleaded so success-
“ fully as to obtain my release. My
“ liberator was a youth of family,
“ but possessed a very narrow income,
“ which the emoluments of his pro-
“ fession did not considerably aug-
“ ment: I however, by giving him
“ a gilt chariot, and equipping him
“ *en petit maître*, gave him some
“ reputation with the ladies, and
“ afterwards

“ afterwards bestowed on him my
 “ eldest daughter. My wife soon
 “ after died, and my youngest girl
 “ retired to a convent.

“ I passed some years in Paris, 'till,
 “ disgusted with the levities of the
 “ great—the arrogance of the learn-
 “ ed—and the pertinacity of the ig-
 “ norant, I sought this cell, where,
 “ secluded from the world, I mean
 “ to pass the remnant of my days in
 “ innocence and tranquillity. After
 “ a minute survey of the events of
 “ my life, I see not an essential evil
 “ which prudence might not have
 “ avoided.

" avoided.—Go then, my son, search
 " diligently into thyself, and thou
 " shalt find peace may still crown,
 " and content exhilarate thy droop-
 " ing bosom."

C H A P.

C H A P. XV.

AN INTERESTING EVENT.

THE narrative of the anchoret had wholly engaged the contemplative mind of the Countess, while the image of the stranger remained indelibly impressed on the sickening fancy of Clara. A certain predilection in his form, she nourished with fondness, till his presence

fence (in her opinion) became necessary to her peace. The Countess no longer was the confidante of her bosom secrets : experience had proved her unworthy the trust. Confined to the narrow limits of her own heart, the intention of visiting the anchoret (or rather *seeking the stranger*) rested unexecuted some weeks, during which Rosa, though she *expatiated* on the history of the *hermit*, studiously avoided naming the *unknown companion*. Her impenetrable silence served only more forcibly to excite the curiosity of Clara, who one evening resolved to steal out from the

castle

castle and visit the venerable Earl of Carelmont.

We have already observed her beauties were faded, and the lively bloom of her countenance succeeded by a deadly paleness. Her lovely but fragil form shivered in the cool breeze, as she glided through the avenue. A veil of azure coloured gauze at once shaded her from the observation of passengers, and concealed her luxuriant tresses, which flowed wantonly o'er her shoulders. With steps light as air she darted through the entrance of the wood,
and

and eagerly demanded of an old man (who resided near the cave) whether the anchoret was still there. He informed her the hermit had been absent some days, and that a gentleman had also enquired for him.

Chagrined at his absence, Clara was hastily returning, when passing through a narrow close, o'er which some briars hung and obstructed the way, her progress was impeded by a branch that had entangled itself in her auburn locks, which had escaped the flimsy confinement of her veil: it was an artless emblem of the situation
of

of her heart, as thoughtlessly ensnared as the lucent ringlet, that wafted by the zephyrs was twined round the bough. The reflection afflicted her. A tear fell as she liberated the sportive captive, and she stood dejectedly musing on this little incident, with eyes bent on earth, and her head reclined like the mountain lily drooping beneath the liquid pressure of the morning dew, when the stranger advanced from the other side of the wood, and was attentively regarding the object before him. His presence recalled her wandering ideas, and she continued her way with quicker pace.

Scarcely

Scarcely could the astonished stranger believe his vision: The fair phantom (for such she appeared, rather than a child of mortality) walked hastily on: he followed at a respectful distance, till she arrived at the castle, where she entered unperceived by the domestics, and delighted by the knowledge of the stranger's being at last acquainted with her abode.

The anxious breast fondly embraces the faintest shadow of hope; and this circumstance, however trivial in itself, amused her thoughts. Fancy, that volatile goddess, whose elastic wing

wing out-soars space and probability, painted a thousand romantic prospects of ideal happiness, and delusively lulled her *real* sorrows to rest.—Clara found new charms in solitude, and spent her time, if not cheerfully, unalloyed by that deep regret which had so lately embittered each slow-paced hour. The gardens of the chateau were spacious and beautiful. On the east side (next the wood) was a temple of magnificent structure, and adorned with paintings from the Heathen Mythology, executed by the most eminent artists. To this spot she frequently retired.—The Countess

avoided her society, (so true is it that the presence of the injured is ever a tacit reproof to the guilty) and diverted herself in her closet, or in visiting the peasants in the environs.

One evening, while Clara was in her beloved temple listening to the melodious warblings of plaintive Philomel, a superb equipage arrived at the castle, and, in a few minutes, a servant requested her to attend the Countess in the saloon. She readily followed the messenger; but what was her surprise, on entering, to behold

hold Mr. Seymour and the long lost Strickland, supporting the Countess, who was drowned in tears. Clara shrieked and fainted. (Leaving Rosa to the care of Lionel) Strickland flew to her assistance, and in the agony of apprehensive suspense, with difficulty refrained from reproaching the forlorn Countess, as the cause of her sister's afflictions. Clara, however, with proper attention, revived, and artlessly expressed her joy on beholding him again. She was interrupted by the Countess, who, taking her hand, and that of Strickland's, said, in a voice broken and feeble, " Behold,

" my sister, your lover restored to you.
 " Receive, dear Strickland, the blessing I have so long unjustly withheld from you." Then, turning to Lionel, and hesitatingly looking at Strickland, " you wish it ; you counsel me to act so ; and I am ready, Mr. Seymour, to perform my promise." Her speech failed ; she reclined on the bosom of Clara, and wept.

Strickland had too recently smarted from her conduct, to feel much regret at the sacrifice she made. He was grateful for the interest she had
 in

in his safety ; but her subsequent actions had evinced, *passion*, rather than benevolence, dictated the deed : —nor could he, without resentment, view the faded form of Clara, who apparently felt no satisfaction in her sister's consent to their union.—She, indeed, recollected with horror her precipitate vow ; nor could her affection for Strickland surmount so fatal an obstacle.

Mr. Seymour, amid this scene, was alone calm and unconcerned. His eye ranged o'er the rich furniture, the extensive grounds, and silently calcu-

lated the revenues of the Countess, in preference to attempting, by unavailing arguments, to soothe her grief, which gradually subsided; and with an air of dignity and resignation, she welcomed her guests, and prepared to entertain them: “*You* will be happy, “ dear Clara,” said she, as she passed her, “ and I cease to repine.”—“ We “ shall be happy,” echoed Strickland, and threw himself at the feet of the sweet sister of Montmorien. “ No, “ Strickland,” returned she, “ between us there is an insuperable “ bar: I have vowed never to be “ yours; and the sacred promise is “ pledged

“pledged in the sight of heaven,
 “and enrolled in the records of fate.”
 —“The Countess absolves you,” replied the distressed lover; “it is null
 “and void by her consent.”—“True,”
 cried Clara, “but my *heart* feels its
 “validity, and must ever tenaciously
 “adhere to its performance.”—In
 vain did Seymour and Rosa persuade her to renounce her scruples: she remained inflexible, nor could the eloquence of Strickland shake her resolution. “I will ever be your
 “friend,” said Clara; “but I can
 “never be your wife:” and thus, with mutual professions of celibacy,

these affectionate lovers terminated the argument.

Mr. Seymour was vexed at the obstinate perseverance of Clara. He wished the marriage of Strickland to take place, and considered it as the only means of ensuring to him the regard of the Countess.—Disappointed therefore in this instance, he pressed a speedy solemnization of his nuptials with Rosa, and the next morning was *reluctantly* agreed to by the Countess for their celebration. That unfortunate woman rallied her depressed spirits, determined to expiate

piate her former indiscretion by consistently demeaning herself on this painful occasion. She therefore, with an appearance of fortitude, met him in the chapel, where the ceremony was performed by an old priest of the family; and Seymour received from the hand of Strickland this self-devoted victim.—When it was ended, Lady Seymour begged permission to retire. The place had recalled an innumerable train of dreadful recollections. It was here she had groaned o'er the martyred Louvais: here the impetuous Montmorien was interred: and here the adored Strickland

land had bestowed her on the man, of all others, least worthy so valuable a gift.

It was resolved they should, the following day, leave this gloomy habitation and return to Paris. The imagination of Clara, delighted with the *friendship* of Strickland, formed a thousand halcyon schemes. Her vivacity returned, and a gleam of happiness reanimated her countenance.— The domestics were not a little astonished at this rapid succession of events; but they had not leisure to discuss them with Egbert, who alone
was

was capable of explaining them, by reason of their preparation for the intended journey.—The Countess and Clara embraced the good La Bertrande with filial tenderness.—The faithful Governante, whose declining health rendered her unequal to accompanying them, parted with her pupils with the deepest demonstrations of sorrow. On their way, Lady Seymour expressed her surprise at their discovery of her retreat, and requested the particulars of their adventures since her departure from London. Mr. Seymour referred her to Strickland, who proceeded to satisfy

tisfy her curiosity by relating them as follows:

“ Mr. Seymour discovering to me
“ your *real* character, at once, Ma-
“ dam, solved the *seeming* mystery of
“ Lady Clara’s concealment, and the
“ motive which prompted your re-
“ turn to France. We mutually sus-
“ pected you would immediately visit
“ this kingdom, and instantly crossed
“ the channel, in order to intercept
“ you at Calais, where we naturally
“ concluded you would disembark.
“ After waiting some days in fruit-
“ less expectation of your arrival, we
“ set

“ set out for Paris, not doubting but
“ we should gain some intelligence
“ of you from your friends in that
“ capital; but researches were in-
“ effectual, and we therefore thought
“ it more eligible to travel through
“ the country; but this design was
“ protracted by Mr. Seymour’s ac-
“ cidentally meeting some English
“ acquaintance, who earnestly en-
“ treated him to stay some time with
“ them, as they were strangers in
“ France.—Anxious to recover the
“ lost possessor of my heart, whom I
“ considered as forcibly detained
“ from me, I departed alone for
“ Orleans,

“ Orleans, from whence I continued
“ my journey through irregular roads
“ to ———, where the perturbation
“ of my mind, and the excessive
“ fatigue I had undergone, wrought
“ so unfavourable an effect on my
“ health, as to confine me to my
“ chamber for a month.—On my
“ recovery, the fame of the anchoret
“ excited my curiosity; and in order
“ to facilitate an acquaintance with
“ him, I retired to a farm-house in
“ the vicinity of the wood, where I
“ again enjoyed the unspeakable felicity of beholding my beloved Clara.
“ Agreeable to my promise to Mr.
“ Seymour,

“ Seymour, I postponed visiting you
 “ till I had wrote him an account of
 “ your situation, and conjured him
 “ immediately to speed to ———.
 “ Fearful of a second removal of
 “ Lady Clara, I declined making
 “ myself known, or availing myself
 “ of the discovery, till Mr. Seymour
 “ should arrive.”

“ I admire your fidelity to your
 “ friend,” interrupted the Countess;
 “ but you must not imagine your
 “ disguise had escaped my penetra-
 “ tion. No, Strickland, I knew you,
 “ however altered by grief and de-
 “ bilitated

" bilitated by sickness. A secret sym-
 " pathy proclaimed your presence,
 " and it was with pain I restrained
 " my feelings, while I listened to
 " your discourse with the anchorite.—
 " Pardon me, gentle Clara," resum-
 ed Rosa, (observing she looked amaz-
 ed at this declaration) " if a womanish
 " jealousy prevented my acquainting
 " you with a circumstance so inte-
 " resting." Mademoiselle de Mont-
 morien assured her she forgave her,
 and they cheerfully travelled on to
 Paris, where they took up their abode
 in the hotel d'Angleterre.

C H A P. XVI.

P A R I S.

THEY retired early to rest, and the next morning visited the spectacles most worthy observation in that city. On their return to dinner, they were informed some British travellers desired to be introduced to them.—As soon therefore as the desert was removed, they were ushered in by Monsieur de Cabulis (the Maitre Vol. II. H d'Hotel).

d'Hotel). To the astonishment of Lady Seymour, she beheld Miss Staple and her mamma, the brother and his lady, with two other gentlemen, enter, and familiarly accost Mr. Seymour.— Fortunately Miss Maria had not the least recognition of de Beaufort in the person of the Countess, who returned her compliments with ease and good humour. Miss Staple was equipped to the extreme *a la Francoise*, as was Mr. Dudley and his bride, who, she informed them, had proposed this tour ;—“ and I readily “ adopted the plan,” whispered the volatile Maria, “ as I wished to ac-
“ quire

“ quire that becoming nonchalance a
 “ long residence à *Paris* can only
 “ give.”

The gentlemen soon entered into conversation, and formed an agreeable relief to the melancholy Countess and Strickland, who were mutually chagrined at the occurrences of the castle.—Commodore Nevil, who was uncle to Mrs. Dudley Staple, was an honest, blunt seaman, who, by dint of *mere merit* and perseverance, obtained a broad pennant, and by the *Fortune de la guerre* acquired a considerable sum of money, which he was willing

to spend in the society of his friends. He was a man of good natural abilities, but his education had been chiefly restricted to a knowledge of naval tactics, and his manners rough as the tempestuous element on which he had passed the greatest part of his life. He possessed sufficient discrimination to despise the frivolity of Miss Staple, and hoped to preserve Mrs. Dudley from the contagion of levity and affectation.—His nephew, just liberated from the confinement of a scholastic life, was a petit petit in his dress, and a pedant in his expression: a superficial acquaintance with the sciences

sciences had given him an arrogance of opinion ; and a faint knowledge of the manners of polite circles, an assumption of taste and elegance, which only served to render the shallowness of his understanding and his ignorance of the world more conspicuous.—The *légereté* of the French Noblesse had incited him to despise the *little solid* learning he possessed. In company therefore he constantly ridiculed the idea of mental erudition, while in private he arrogated a superiority over the rest of his family on the strength of a *classical* education. Such companions were by no means

succumbed to the humour of the Commodore, who, without any ceremony, openly expressed his disapprobation of their follies, and brought with him, by way of relief to the party, a Highlander of family, (Mr. Macleod) who had formerly been his chaplain on board. This gentleman, to a compendious study of the most important subjects, joined a happy talent for conversation, and a fashionable pliability of opinion.

Pleased to lose in society the memory of the past, and fearful of suffering her foreboding apprehensions
to

to dive into futurity, Lady Seymour kept up the discourse with vivacity; even Clara partook of the general hilarity, and care seemed awhile to be banished from the hearts of our adventurers.—After having discussed the various amusements, &c. which Paris afforded, they insensibly entered on the policy of the French cabinet. The Commodore, with the *genuine warmth* of a Briton, endeavoured to prove it infinitely inferior to our own, and laughed at their attempting to rival us in our naval force. Mr. Seymour warmly opposed him—(he was, since the failure of the Earl's exer-

tions with the Premier in his favour, of no party, pleased with neither whig nor tory, but reviled, indiscriminately, the constitution, its supporters and opponents, and was continually predicting some dreadful calamity to the realm)—and concluded the arguments he advanced in defence of his system, by asserting, another century would see the British crown totally despoiled of its transmarine dominions. “Tis
“false,” cried the Commodore; “are
“not our oaks and tars an invincible
“security? Did these Monsieurs ever
“withstand the arms of Britain? A
“parcel of fair-weather sparks, who
“do’nt

“ do’nt know what service is; fellows
 “ that a north wind would confine to
 “ their cabins. Hark ye, friend, I
 “ *know* the navy, and give us *una-*
 “ *nimity* with our *ministers* at home,
 “ and we’ll trust to our fleets and
 “ armies for the defence of our
 “ *settlements* abroad.”

At the moment Mr. Seymour was
 preparing to reply, Count Marcaffin
 was announced, who humbly begged
 permission to pay his devoirs to Miss
 Staple. “ The sweetest creature in
 “ the world,” said she in a low voice
 to Clara ; “ the very standard of taste
 “ in

“ in the Parisian circles.” In came the Count, bowing very low at every step, and dispersing a cloud of Marchal powder at each inclination of his head. “ Charming fellow,” cried Miss Staple to Clara ; “ don’t you “ admire him ? ” — “ Admire him,” repeated Nevil with a sneer ; “ no, “ who the d-v-l should like such a “ popinjay ? ” The Count understood English, and after eying the Commodore contemptuously, exclaimed, “ *Quel bête !* ” and sauntered round to pay his compliments to Miss Staple : “ I have been perfectly “ miserable not to have had it in my “ power

“ power to see you this morning;
“ but some Messieurs Anglois have
“ detained me on a fishing party thus
“ long from mon adorable Mifs
“ Staple.” Maria simpered, and
Monsieur le Comte found something
equally *trivial* and *gallant* to say to
every lady in company. “ There is
“ an animal,” cried the Commodore;
“ there is *French taste*. Do you
“ think such fellows as this stormed
“ Omoa or defended Gibraltar? Did
“ such puppies maintain so long our
“ sovereignty over the seas?” Mr.
Seymour was silent, and Strickland
applauded the sentiments of the Com-
modore.

modore. "Lard, Count," cried Mrs. Staple, "we did not see you at
 " the Countess of Scribble's route
 " last night; we had a collection of
 " the smartest *epitaphs* read, and all
 " her ladyship's own *compilation*."—
 " *Epigrams*, Madam," said Dudley
 with a frown, "and *composed* by the
 " Countess. Lady Scribble has
 " an infinite deal of wit; don't you
 " think so, Mr. Macleod?"—"A
 " tolerable hand at a lampoon; but
 " then her style is inaccurate, and
 " her themes outre."—"I deny it,"
 returned Dudley; "her wit is point-
 " ed as an angle, and her language
 " nervous

"nervous and bold." — "*Bold*
"enough," replied Macleod; "I
"agree with you there." — "Are you
"acquainted with the Countess, Sir?"
said young Staple, addressing himself
to Mr. Strickland, "the first woman
"in Paris or London either." — "If
"we may judge of her Ladyship's
"manners by her writings, I am
"happy in my ignorance of her."

Dudley whistled, turned round to
Lady Seymour, and started a new
subject, while Lionel, Macleod, and
the Commodore, mutually ridiculed
the English pedant and the French
coxcomb.

coxcomb.—They soon left the society of our friends for the opera, and our party passed the remainder of the evening in lamenting the folly of our *modish* travellers, who, not content with appearing contemptible in their own country, by a thousand *assumed levities*, spread the ridicule through half the kingdoms in Europe.

C H A P.

CHAP. XVII.

DEPENDANCE.

THE following morning Clara, escorted by Strickland, called on Miss Staple, (agreeable to the request of that lively young lady) who being engaged in a tête à tête with Count Marcassin, desired her to take a book in her dressing-room. On their entrance, an elegant young woman, (who

(who was employed in embroidering a trimming) arose, and would have quitted the room, had not Clara insisted on her stay.—After attentively gazing on her some minutes, Strickland exclaimed, in a tone of wonder, “Mrs. Mellish!” The lady bowed, and continued her work.—After waiting some time, Miss Staple, who had dispatched her lover, came in. “Lord, Eloisa,” said she, (previously apologizing to Clara) “what do you do here?” Mrs. Mellish hastily left the apartment; and on Strickland’s enquiring after her husband, Maria proceeded to inform them he
was

was dead, and Eloisa was a *dependant* on their family.

“ Mrs. Mellish,” continued she,
“ is my cousin by the mother’s side;
“ and on her marriage with the Cap-
“ tain, was in possession of a few
“ thousands.—Educated in the coun-
“ try, she was *romantic* in her notions,
“ *sentimental* in her conversation, but
“ unpolished in her manners, as you
“ may perceive.—Well, my mamma
“ brought her to London for a little
“ recreation, where Miss captivated
“ the heart of Mr. Mellish, (a younger
“ brother) whose equipage, like Count
VOL. II. I “ Basset’s,

“ Basset’s, rolled on the four aces ;
 “ but the Captain was a *pretty fellow*,
 “ and on my papa’s remonstrating on
 “ the imprudence of her attachment
 “ to him, she, like a *modern* girl of
 “ spirit, bribed her servant to assist
 “ her, and eloped with him. For
 “ two years they lived in a genteel
 “ stile ; but the Captain’s predilec-
 “ tion for play soon reduced them
 “ to poverty. Eloisa, who tenderly
 “ loved her husband, *passively* sub-
 “ mitted to this change of fortune,
 “ and readily availed herself of her
 “ musical talents, supporting him for
 “ some time by her vocal exertions

“ at

“ at some celebrated private con-
 “ certs.—The little emoluments she
 “ derived from her harmonic abili-
 “ ties were inadequate to maintain-
 “ ing him as a gentleman, and in no
 “ other light could the Captain *con-*
 “ *descend to appear.* Her jewels, her
 “ wardrobe were disposed of in the
 “ fallacious hope of retrieving his
 “ former losses. Disappointed and
 “ distressed, menaced by his credi-
 “ tors abroad, and pining in penury
 “ at home, he confined himself for
 “ some months within the small room
 “ they inhabited, where want of air
 “ and exercise, added to the dejec-
 “ tion

"tion which silently preyed on his
 "spirits, brought on a fever, which
 "speedily put a period to his exist-
 "ence.—Eloisa importuned my papa
 "for relief, and being tolerably clever
 "at her needle, I took her into my
 "service as a kind of humble com-
 "panion."

"Humble indeed," re-echoed Strick-
 land, (involuntarily, who knew her
 history better than the unfeeling girl
 who, with such an air of callous in-
 difference, had related it) "but do
 "the merits of Mrs. Mellish raise her
 "no higher in the esteem of Miss
 "Staple,

“Staple, than as conducive to her
 “convenience, or as appendages to
 “her pride?”—“La,” cried she,
 “what signifies merit now-a-days?
 “Eloisa is so strange in her senti-
 “ments, there is no being her friend.
 “Nay, she had the ingratitude to
 “refuse carrying a note for me to
 “Count Marcassin, and it cost me an
 “almost new suit as a bribe to my
 “woman.”—“Let’s depart, my dear
 “Clara,” said he, (eying Maria with
 ineffable contempt) “let us fly
 “this scene of contumely and folly.”

Mademoiselle de Montmorien would
 have stayed a few minutes in com-

passion to the feelings of Miss Staple, (who was evidently mortified to the lowest degree of *servility*, and stood incoherently palliating her treatment of her cousin, and her correspondence with the Count) but she knew the impetuosity of Strickland's disposition too well to hazard his displeasure by suffering her complaisance to prevail o'er the honest scorn she felt for her—and therefore hastily wished her good morning.

On their return, they recounted the adventure to Lady Seymour, who not only sympathized with her sorrows,
but

but endeavoured to remedy the cause, by imploring Mr. Seymour to suffer her to reside with them. That gentleman, whose constancy to his lady was by no means inviolate, instantly assented to her request, wisely considering, that while she was *amused* at home, she would have less opportunity of inspecting *his* conduct out of doors. Before his departure for the chateau, he had commenced an intrigue with Signora Cantata, (a singer at the Italian opera) who had *literally* been the cause of retarding his search for the Countess, which circumstance, not the arrival of his English friends,

as related by Mr. Strickland, had detained him at Paris:—nor could any thing *less* than the fortune of Rosa have seduced him a moment from the society of this fascinating songstrefs—who absolutely governed him in every *material point*.—His new equipage, &c. were chosen by her, while Lady Seymour, to whom as a bride they were presented, was not even consulted; and her servants recommended by La Signora, who filled her train with *creatures* of her own nation, and wholly subservient to her interest.

Rosa

Rosa had too much penetration not to perceive the indifference of Lionel; but her secret partiality for Strickland at once reconciled her to it, as it precluded every just cause for complaint, and even erased the stigma of ingratitude, of which she stood self-accused. While thus interiorly distressed by the dictates of inclination, and constrained externally to wear the appearance of cheerfulness, her heart, abstracted from every selfish consideration, ardently sought every occasion of exerting the pure benevolence which alone was capable of dilating her joyless bosom. Mrs.

Mellish

Mellish was an object that deserved all her commiseration, and she failed not to embrace the permission of Mr. Seymour to invite her to live with them.—Unapprehensive of wounding the *delicate* souls of the Staple family, she framed a polite, but candid letter to the old lady, soliciting her concurrence to a measure she might reasonably be supposed with pleasure to adopt; and her chagrin was poignant when she received an answer from Mrs. Dudley, informing her, “that
 “for certain *politic motives* on the
 “part of Miss Maria, Mrs. Mellish
 “had been abruptly discarded;” but
 added,

added, "that though her retreat was
" unknown to them, *she* believed Mrs.
" M——'s conduct not only *irre-*
" *proachable*, but *deserving* the friend-
" ship of Lady Seymour." Rosa
was afflicted to find her generous in-
tentions frustrated by an apparent
caprice of Miss Staple's, and zealously
employed her woman in searching
for the abode of this unfortunate de-
pendant. — Strickland likewise sedu-
lously explored every place likely to
be the shelter of the fugitive Eloisa;
for Mrs. Staple scrupled not to de-
clare, she had dismissed her unprovid-
ed with money, and a stranger in
France.

Five

Five days elapsed in this fruitless search, when Lady Seymour (accompanied by Clara and Strickland) was walking down a narrow street, where, fearful of a carriage, which was furiously driving along, they stepped into a mean-looking house, from whence issued a young man of a pleasing address and ingenuous mein, who, in humane terms, conjured the mistress of the shop to take care of his unhappy patient; and assured her, whatever expence she should be at, he would (himself) defray. "The lady, continued he, " is too weak to be " moved, but as soon as she is able,

" I

“ I will take her home.”—Lady Seymour entered the little boutique, and after making some trifling purchases, enquired the name and situation of the lady whom the gentleman had so kindly recommended to her care. The petite bourgeoisie informed her, “ that her lodger was an
“ English lady, and had resided with
“ her a few days only: that she was
“ seemingly oppressed by anxiety,
“ and enfeebled by sickness; and, in
“ fact, owed her existence to the vigi-
“ lance and humanity of Monsieur la
“ Sonde, who, by chance, had dis-
“ covered her abode, and ever since
“ attended

“ attended her with unremitting zeal
“ and tenderness.” This account
was sufficient to convince our trium-
virate they had found the object of
their search. Rosa, therefore, it was
agreed, should ascend to the wretch-
ed chamber, where the unfortunate
Eloisa lay extended on a miserable
bed, whose furniture forcibly re-
minded the Countess of the insta-
bility of human grandeur. It had
formerly been of crimson satin; the
reflection of its faded glow was still
bright enough to suffuse with a faint
gleam of red the pallid cheek of the
languid Mrs. Mellish. As none pos-
sessed

felt in a more eminent degree the *feelings* or the *language* of humanity than Lady Seymour, so Eloisa, when informed by her of her generous designs towards her, with ingenuous gratitude, unrepresed by the recollection of past humiliation, accepted her kind offer, and promised to repair to the Countess as soon as her health would permit.

Rosa, though not actuated by that impertinent curiosity which too often prompts the interrogations of the ladies, yet wished to be acquainted with the motives of Miss Staple, for
so

so suddenly discarding and exposing her relation to all the miseries of want. Eloisa easily divined her sentiments, and, with modest diffidence, apologizing for the uninteresting detail she should relate, proceeded to gratify them:—

“ Accuse me not of vanity, my
 “ dear Madam, if, in the course of
 “ my little narrative, I am unwilling-
 “ ly obliged to arrogate attractions
 “ superior to those of my cousin’s,
 “ whose jealousy alone impelled her
 “ to chase me so disgracefully from
 “ her protection. We had not been
 “ long

“ long resident in Paris, ere Mr.
 “ Dudley introduced the Count Mar-
 “ cassin to our acquaintance, and
 “ with much *emphasis* recommended
 “ him, as his friend, to Maria.

“ Gay, volatile, fond of adulation,
 “ and proud of her conquest, Miss
 “ Staple eagerly entered into the
 “ views of her brother, and played
 “ off those little arts, which are ever
 “ the infallible distinctions of a *co-*
 “ *quette*.—The Count was gallant in
 “ his manner, and her sanguine hopes
 “ flattered that he was not insensible to

“ what she ridiculouſly ſtilled her
 “ tendreſſe for him.

“ The frequent viſits of the Count
 “ made him regarded by us all, as
 “ one of the family ; and in confe-
 “ quence of ceremony being laid
 “ aſide, I was ſuffered to appear as
 “ uſual. My unhappy form attract-
 “ ed his notice, and being an enthu-
 “ ſiaſt in muſic, I was *commanded* by
 “ Miſs Maria to ſing and play to
 “ him.—The mortification I hourly
 “ indured from the miſtaken pride of
 “ my relations, convinced the Count
 “ that every exterior reſpect to me,

“ must be offensive to *them*. He
 “ therefore paid every obsequious
 “ attention to Maria in public, while
 “ he studiously sought the slightest
 “ opportunity of importuning me
 “ with his passion in private.—I re-
 “ jected, with disdain, his protesta-
 “ tions, and awed him into silence
 “ by my resolute denial of his
 “ suit.

“ Maria, who was impatient to
 “ become La Comtesse Marcaffin,
 “ flirted violently with his Lordship,
 “ and dispatched a thousand frivo-
 “ lous messages daily to him.—Her

K 2 “ education

“ education had been strangely neg-
 “ lected, and her billets, however ex-
 “ pressive of the fervor of her flame,
 “ were miserably deficient in point
 “ of orthography and grammatical
 “ accuracy.—I therefore was raised
 “ to the dignity of her confidential
 “ amanuensis, her secretary in or-
 “ dinary being the valet of Mr.
 “ Dudley.

“ Mrs. Staple, though ignorant
 “ of propriety in the general occur-
 “ rences of life, sensibly felt the
 “ indiscretion of her daughter's con-
 “ duct, and expressly forbid her
 “ woman's

“ woman’s carrying any future let-
“ ters to the Count. Maria, thus
“ frustrated in her schemes, applied
“ to me to be the messenger between
“ them:—I refused her with the
“ warmth such an ungenerous con-
“ duct merited.—For some days she
“ was fullen and haughty with me,
“ but on the Count’s remonstrating
“ on the cruelty of her treatment,
“ her rage was boundless ; and after
“ forging a tale highly prejudicial to
“ my integrity to her mamma, I was
“ turned out of doors, devoid of
“ support, friendless and unknown.
“ The contents of my purse were

K 3

“ small,


“ small, and I retired to this obscure
“ place, where the grief which prey-
“ ed on my heart spread its debili-
“ tating influence through my whole
“ frame.

“ Monsieur La Sonde, who attend-
“ ed the daughter of the mistress
“ of the house, compassionated my
“ case, and not only restored me
“ to life by his medical skill, but
“ furnished me with such nutritious
“ aliments as were likely to invigorate
“ my relaxed strength.—His lady
“ (the daughter of the Earl of Carel-
“ mont) also visited me, and tendered
“ me

" me a pecuniary assistance, which,
 " already oppressed by obligation I
 " can never return, I resolutely refus-
 " ed. To your benevolence, madam,
 " I am more vulnerable. No stran-
 " ger to your character, I rely im-
 " plicitly on your kindness; and
 " feeling all the goodness of your
 " intentions, with transport accept
 " the asylum you offer."

Rosa prevented the acknowledg-
 ment she poured forth, by rising to
 depart; previously insisting on her
 accepting a note of small value.
 While she was pressing her to re-

ceive it, Commodore Nevil entered :

“ Avaft, my lady,” cried he, “ you
 “ muft not ufurp my privilege; Eloifa
 “ is my kinfwoman, and I muft
 “ affert a prior right to relieve
 “ her.”

The Countefs informed him of her
 defign in taking Eloifa home ; a pro-
 pofal which the honeft feaman affent-
 ed to with pleafure.—“ You fhall
 “ never more, my dear Mrs. Mel-
 “ lifh,” faid he, “ be expofed to the
 “ insults of that plaifter of Paris
 “ puppet Maria, or be the tool of her
 “ intrigues

“ intrigues with the empty-pated
“ Count.”

In this way he rallied on, till interrupted by Rosa, who reminded him of Eloisa's indisposition, and conjured him to refrain from conversing with her, till she should be better able to participate the discourse.—“ You are right,” cried the Commodore; “ but on my soul I
“ cannot bear it, Madam.—Kitty
“ shall never inherit a six-pence of
“ mine, for marrying into such a
“ family.—I have toiled night and
“ day, braved winds and waves, and
“ it

" it shall never be said a British sea-
" man stood by and saw a deserving
" ~~woman~~ wronged."—Lady Sey-
mour applauded his energy, and
smilingly requested his company be-
low.

The Commodore took an affectionate leave of Mrs. Mellish, and descended, vowing vengeance on the Staples. Strickland and Clara had already learned the history of Eloisa's illness from the landlady; and after repeating the charges of Monsieur la Sonde, they departed on their way home. Rosa briefly explained the
cause

cause of Mrs. Mellish's dismissal, and the whole party loudly inveighed against the inhumanity of Mrs. Staple and Maria, with whom they unanimously agreed to discontinue their acquaintance.—The Commodore had been informed by Strickland (as passing by) of the retreat of Mrs. Mellish, whom he ever partially regarded; and in the first emotions of his resentment, he removed his baggage, and took up his abode in a distant quarter of the city.

CHAP.

C H A P. XVIII.

A V I S I T.

MR. Seymour approved their proceedings, and at the desire of the Countess, waited on the surgeon with her thanks for his friendly care of her protégé.—La Sonde modestly replied to his praises, and intreated the honor of a visit from Lady Seymour, of whom he had heard so exalted a character from the lips of his

his grateful patient. Rosa, interested by his relation to the anchoret, and prepossessed in his favour from his conduct to Eloisa, joyfully embraced the invitation, and without ceremony waited on him one afternoon, accompanied by Clara and Strickland.

Mr. La Sonde received them with a graceful ease : “ You come not, “ ladies,” said he, “ to visit the mansion of magnificence, but that of “ simplicity and content.”—His lady came to meet them ; her countenance verified his assertion.—“ Let us wave “ form,” said the sprightly Madame
La,

La Sonde; "we are already friends, " for are we not impelled by sympathy towards each other?"—Rosa embraced, and warmly assured her of her esteem.—Imagination cannot form a language to describe a more lovely figure than Madame La Sonde. Her person was small, but exquisitely proportioned; and her air at once fraught with dignity, and a certain playful grace. Her eyes sparkled with vivacity, and her cheeks glowed with a bloom, which seemed, by its lively hue, expressive of the happiness which animated the whole. Her discourse was chearful, and her manners volatile, but

but the keenness of her wit rendered her childish sallies excusable.—“ You
“ have taken me from my employ-
“ ment,” said she, leading them into
a small garden, well stored with physical herbs planted by her hand, “ we
“ must not be idle.” The ladies
seated themselves in an alcove, and
Madame pursued her avocation of
weeding till the tea equipage being
brought in, she resumed her station,
as mistress of the family, with mingled
sweetness and majesty.

As soon as it was removed, her
two children came in (beauteous as
cherubs)

cherubs) and handed to the guests the choicest fruits in season. Rosa careffed them with unfeigned affection; and turning to the delighted mother, exclaimed, "Ah, Madame, how enviable
 " is your lot!"—"Can Lady Seymour think so?" replied she. "Can
 " she prefer the simplicity of our
 " lives to the splendor of her own?"—
 " Oh yes," cried Clara, " happiness
 " flies from the dull restraints of
 " ceremony in the gay circles, but
 " ranges free and unbounded in these
 " scenes of elegant retirement."—
 " Happiness is centered in ourselves,
 " my dear Mademoiselle," returned
 Madame

Madame La Sonde, "and I find it in
" the society of the gay and the
" grave: to-morrow we will go to the
" assembly, and you shall see cheer-
" fulness wing my way through the
" dance, and the joyous pulsation of
" my heart beat in unison with my
" steps." Our party were enchanted
with her company, and Rosa now
thought she had found happiness in
the person of Madame La Sonde.

C H A P. XIX.

C O N C L U S I O N.

SHE entered into the diversions of Paris, and her griefs insensibly dispelled. Impressed with the most exalted sentiments of rectitude, and resolute in the observance of them, she had weaned, by degrees, her affection from Strickland; and studiously attaching herself to the welfare of Lionel, had gained such an ascendancy

dancy over him, as to have influenced his actions, and wrought his reformation.—The tenderness so long lavished on distant objects, centered in her; now sensible of her worth, and anxious to expiate his former vices by an inviolable fidelity and attention to her peace, as the first proof of his sincerity, he abandoned La Signora, who had artfully secured a valuable settlement, and led him, during their connection, into unbounded extravagancies.—The fair Madame La Sonde had reconciled Rosa to society; and she, in a short time, resumed her pristine vivacity.—Strickland engag-

ed the Countess and Mr. Seymour in his favour; and with the most persuasive eloquence, they endeavoured to render Clara propitious to the hopes of her lover.—Her opinion vanquished by the reasoning of Lady Seymour, and the impulses of her own heart; she began to retract from her late fastidious protestations, and seriously think of becoming the wife of Strickland.

Such was the favourable aspect of affairs, when the death of Lord Seymour recalled them to England. Lionel, won by the example of the
generous

generous Strickland, resolved to shake off the contracted notions which had hitherto biaſſed his judgment, and return deſerving of the dignity he was to enjoy.—“ I will prove,” ſaid he, “ however flagrant my paſt errors
 “ have been, that the dormant ſparks
 “ of virtue, awakened and cheriſhed
 “ by the exemplary conduct of a diſ-
 “ cerning friend, and an affectionate
 “ and ſenſible wife, are yet capable
 “ of obliterating the impreſſions of
 “ youthful indiſcretion, and forming
 “ anew the contrite mind.”

Let us now ſay a word of our Pa-

L 3

riſian

rifian friends, by way of farewell to them.—Monsieur La Sonde, by his merit, and the interest of Lord Seymour, obtained considerable honours from l'Academie Royale; and in the philanthropic practice of his profession, and the conversation of his charming lady, enjoyed the truest and unalloyed content; while the supercilious Miss Staple, disappointed in her designs on the heart of the Count, and humbled in her own ideas, accepted the hand of Mr. Macleod, who, tempted by her fortune, overlooked the defects of her mind.—Commodore Nevil, disgusted with the

levity of the young Dudley, and displeased to see his niece immersed in the same vortex of dissipation, resolved to bestow his fortune on Mrs. Mellish, (whose advocate he had ever been with Mrs. Staple and Maria;) but, scrupulous of the propriety of this disposition of his effects, he preferred investing her with a more general and unexceptionable claim by *marriage*; and Eloisa, whose gratitude was only equalled by her desert of obligation in an union with the Commodore, found an ample compensation for her sufferings with Mr. Mellish.

With



With unaffected sorrow, our adventurers bid adieu to the lovely Madame La Sonde, and set out for England; but unhappily visiting Montpellier, on account of the indisposition of Rosa, Morton, the injured Morton, recognized his base dishonourer, and claimed from his sword an atonement for the wrong.—Lord Seymour, unknown to any, accepted the challenge, and fell by a hand, apparently commissioned to be the avenger of its injuries.

The world had now no charms for Lady Seymour, whose fortitude was
unequal

unequal to supporting so unexpected
a calamity. "I have pursued," said
she, "a shadow of felicity, and, led
" by fancy, have delusively roved
" through the deviating mazes of
" *life*.—Let me now in retirement
" profit by my disappointments, and
" prepare myself for the certain satis-
" faction of a better state.—You, my
" Clara, with your Strickland, undis-
" turbed by reflections of the past,
" and fearless of the future, will be
" happy."

Solitude, and the society of her
beloved sister, were the choice
of

of Clara; and Strickland rated too justly the value of *independence*, again to embark on the variable surface of public favour.—The salubrious climate of France induced them to remain in that kingdom; and after arranging the affairs of the deceased Earl (who bequeathed to the Countess the whole of his estates), and, at the instance of Rosa, the celebration of the nuptials of Clara and Strickland, they retired to the chateau, where they resided in uninterrupted tranquillity.—Often would they discuss the events of their former lives, and the fallaciousness of their pursuits;

suits; and after drawing every inference reason or experience could suggest, they would mutually conclude, in the words of the anchorite, That cheerfully to sustain the evils incident to mortality, *was literally to be happy.*

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